

Dear Mr. Weaver,

Planning Application APP/24/00053 Multi Storey Car Park, Bulbeck Road, Havant

Thank you for your consultation. The site lies within the historic core of Havant and within an area of high archaeological importance. This area of Havant has been settled since at least the Roman period, with a small Roman town developing around a crossroads, centred approximately 100m to the northeast of the site. The projected course of the east/west Roman road, which defined part of the crossroads, passes 50m to the north of the site. Although some recent works have uncovered evidence of the Roman town (in the form of artefacts and buildings elements), a paucity of archaeological investigations within in the centre of Havant has resulted in little being known about the Roman development of this archaeologically significant settlement. Later occupation of the town throughout the early-medieval and medieval periods is also poorly understood but is important in understanding the development of modern Havant.

Whilst the development of the multi-story car park is likely to have created some negative impacts within the site, this is unlikely to have completely removed the archaeological potential, with archaeological remains often surviving in between foundation piers or rafts. Even in areas of the site that have been subjected to greater levels of previous impacts, the archaeological potential could still be retained. Whilst the previous development of parts of the site may have truncated some archaeological remains, there is still a potential for remains to be present at deeper levels (such as the deeper strata of archaeology or lower portions of truncated pits, wells etc). Given the location of the site, there is a high potential that important archaeological remains relating to the development of Havant may be present, including evidence of the Roman settlement as well as early medieval and medieval development of the town. The archaeological potential is for evidence of occupation, as well as evidence that might shed light on to the date at which the grid of streets were laid out and for evidence regarding the trades and industries practised in historic Havant. Given the nature of historic urban development, it is likely that there will be relatively deep strata of archaeological deposits.

The demolition of below ground elements of the car park (referred to in the submitted method statement as 3.4 – Substructure Demolition) has a high risk of exposing and destroying archaeological remains. In particular, the removal of the slab and the grubbing out of foundations would have a severe negative impact on any archaeological remains which might be present. I am unsure as to the mechanics of the prior-approval process and would defer to the knowledge and experience of the planning authority, but I believe that it would be appropriate for any demolition, as described, to include reasonable steps to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly destroyed without record. This should take the form of archaeological monitoring of the sub-structure demolition and subsequent reporting, in accordance with an agreed written scheme of investigation. Given that the site is proposed to be re-developed, there is the possibility that these results would have a bearing on the design of the development and determining the treatment of archaeological remains in any future application.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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Senior Archaeologist

Waste and Environmental Services

